What to Do When Injured at Work

If you are injured at work, you may be entitled to injury compensation benefits provided under the Federal Employees' Compensation Act (FECA). Federal employees have certain rights and responsibilities in filing for these benefits:

- Immediately report any work-related injury to your supervisor. If your injury requires medical treatment, obtain care as soon as possible. If you sustain a traumatic injury, you may obtain a Form CA-16, Authorization for Examination and/or Treatment from your supervisor or ICPA.
- You have a right to choose your treating physician. You may elect to be treated by a physician at a military treatment facility (if available) or by a duly qualified physician of your choice who is not excluded by the Office of Workers' Compensation Programs (OWCP). You must notify your supervisor of your preferred choice prior to scheduling an appointment. Any request by your supervisor or the occupational health clinic that you be evaluated by a medical clinic or contract physician must not interfere with your preferred physician appointment.
- To protect your rights to certain benefits, complete the Form CA-1 or CA-2 electronically using Electronic Data Interchange (EDI) with your supervisor as soon as possible, but not later than 30 days after your injury. Complete a Form CA-1, Federal Employee's Notice of Traumatic Injury and Claim for Continuation of Pay/Compensation if your injury results from a specific event or a series of events during one day or shift. If you develop a condition due to prolonged exposure lasting more than one day or shift, complete a Form CA-2, Federal Employee's Notice of Occupational Disease and Claim for Compensation. Your supervisor will transmit these forms to the appropriate Injury Compensation Program Administrator (ICPA). Complete these forms as precisely as possible in order to avoid delays caused by asking you for additional information.
- You may be asked to provide additional information. Although your supervisor or other agency representative may assist you, it is your responsibility to obtain the information needed to support your claim.
- If you are temporarily unable to work because of your injury, you need to keep your supervisor informed about your medical condition, and return to work as soon as your physician allows you to do so. Light duty assignments may be available if you are not able to perform your regular job, and if so, you must advise your physician.

Supervisors:
When a civilian employee is injured as a result of work, supervisors have certain basic responsibilities:

- If the employee requires emergency medical treatment, ensure that he or she receives immediate care.
- If the employee's injury results from a specific event or series of events during one day or shift, the supervisor and employee complete a Form CA-1, Federal Employee's Notice of Traumatic Injury and Claim for Continuation of Pay/Compensation using Electronic Data Interchange (EDI). If the employee develops a condition due to prolonged exposure lasting more than one day or shift, complete a Form CA-2, Federal Employee's Notice of Occupational Disease and Claim for Compensation using EDI. For more information on EDI, contact your local ICPA.
- If the employee has a traumatic injury (a specific event or series of events during one day or shift), provide him or her with a Form CA-16, Authorization for Examination and/or Treatment. This form should be issued within four hours of the injury, whether or not the claim appears valid. For questionable claims, box 6b should be checked to indicate its doubtful nature. Only one Form CA-16 may be issued per traumatic injury. A Form CA-16 may not be issued for past medical care, except within 48 hours after emergency treatment.
- When completing Form CA-1 or CA-2, check to see that the facts are consistent. You need not have witnessed the injury to agree with the stated history. Complete the form and submit immediately, whether or not you feel that the claim should be approved. EDI will transmit it to your designated Injury Compensation Program Administrator (ICPA) who will review and authenticate. The EDI system will batch claims daily and transmit to OWCP. If you have specific information which casts doubt on the claim's validity, you may challenge it and supply supporting information, but you must still submit the claim promptly. Failure to do so can result in a fine, imprisonment, or both, under 20 CFR 10.16(a).
- If the employee has a traumatic injury, explain that he or she is entitled to Continuation of Pay (COP) for absences due to disability or obtaining medical treatment, for not more than 45 calendar days following the injury. Any such absence must be supported by medical documentation. The specific COP periods should be clearly indicated on the time and attendance sheets, whether the employee loses entire days or only a few hours of a day. If you are unfamiliar with the COP provisions, contact your local ICPA for further information.
- DoD has an obligation under FECA to accommodate an employees' medical limitations if the treating physician indicates that the employee is capable of performing light duty. Keeping a partially disabled employee in the work place tends to speed his or her recovery, which benefits the employee and reduces agency costs. If the employee is totally disabled, or if you are unable to accommodate the restrictions, maintain contact with the employee during his or her absence from work.
- You should advise your local ICPA promptly of any injuries occurring in your section. You should also refer the injured employee to the ICPA for further assistance after taking the steps described above. The ICPA will provide specific information throughout the course of the injury compensation claim, to both you and the injured employee. The ICPA is also available to provide basic training which can help you become more familiar with what to do when one of your employees is injured at work.
- Your local Injury Compensation Program Administrator (ICPA) point of contact can be reached at 301-619-2176.